Misc.

What Business has a Business Man with Foreign Missions?

BY

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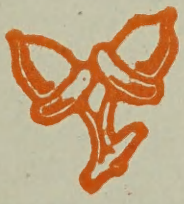

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What Business has a Business Man With Foreign Missions.

Rev. S. M. Zwemer, D.D.

THE word business comes from the Anglo-Saxon, *byzig* which means active, diligent; and the fact that the term man-of-business means what it does and only that, speaks volumes regarding the character of our age. Other professions may have leisure, brook delays, or be sedentary in character. The man of business is always on the go. The commercial world has no place for the careless, dull, indolent, listless talker or idler. Push and Pull are written on every door. Competition is keen, enterprise lively, advertisement startling and ambition world-wide. Now the one great and only business of the Church is missions, and from the nature of modern business and the character of Foreign Missions, two things are very evident. To impress them on you is strictly business and will not take five minutes of your time.

I. Your business is connected with Foreign Missions and you are indebted to them. This is true whether you are a Christian or not, and whether you believe in converting the heathen or consider the enterprise Quixotic and hopeless. Whatever branch of finance or trade you are engaged in, I challenge you to read up its history and you will find yourself face to face with Foreign Missions. There are no banks or drafts in heathendom. There is no partnership in Mohammedan lands, for no one trusts his neighbor. The history of architecture, drainage and transportation all land you in the story of mediæval missions. Modern commerce is

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the fruit of Christianity no less than modern civilization. The fact that London and New York, and not Pekin or Constantinople, are the financial pillars of the world, is due to Columba and Augustin. Peschel, the great geographer, said: "Geography, commerce and the spread of the Christian religion have singularly enough a common history." Missions not only promote but create commerce. Ipecac and quinine and india-rubber were discovered by missionaries; the first steamships on African lakes were built for missions; ploughs were first sold in Turkey by American missionaries; Yankee clocks have followed Yankee school-teachers from China to Peru. Commercial facts like these are so numerous and novel that I commend to you their perusal in books like Warneck's "Modern Missions and Culture," or the Ely Volume on "Missions and Science."

You owe a debt to Foreign Missions as a business man. The heathen have a claim on you at least six days a week. Some of the indispensables of your lunch and the comforts of your home are the result of heathen labor. And no modern business man denies that he owes a duty to his employees. Many of your costly imports are brought to the wharves by heathen slave-labor. Who gathered and dried the tea in India, Ceylon and China? Who toiled at the looms in Persia and Afghanistan to fill your tapestry department? Did the negroes who carried your ivory to the coast ever hear of your Saviour? You say *all* business men are not interested in billiard-balls or piano-keys. Granted. But look at your desk. Whence came the tools of your profession? Your bottle of mucilage and your box of stamps owes a debt to the Arabs of Hadramaut. Your eraser and the handle of your fountain-pen came from South America, the neglected continent. The graphite of your pencil from dark Siberia, and your finest grade of ink from China. If you are in the drug or grocer trade look down

the list of oils, balsams, gums and barks and see what you owe to heathen lands. In the business world no man liveth to himself. A famine at the antipodes changes stock in Wall Street. The occupation of the New Hebrides by missionaries lowered quotations on arrow-root. Livingstone's last journey opened half a million markets for piece-goods. The value of exports and imports of Hawaii *for a single year* are twelve times as much as the total sum spent from the beginning until the end by foreign missionaries in evangelizing and civilizing its people. War destroys markets and has closed more open doors than opened closed ones. But the missionary is the pioneer of commerce and the herald of civilization. If you want a wider market send out more missionaries. The man who reads a primer wants a shirt and his wife a broom. Uganda will soon import American carpet-sweepers. It ought not to take a business man long to see that missions pay, even in the lowest sense of the word.

Now while you profit by this world-market you can not hide from yourself the fact that much of this wealth costs the lives of men for whom Christ died, and that they have died practically in your service, never having heard the Blessed Name. Here lies a great responsibility for business men, and they should show to the world that they have a stake in the greatest business enterprise and the most stupendous Trust of the twentieth century—Foreign Missions.

II. FOREIGN MISSIONS NEEDS YOU, BECAUSE YOU ARE A BUSINESS MAN. When the world was half asleep and wholly drowsy, in the Middle Ages, monks were missionaries Now it is daybreak everywhere and monks are out-of-date. We want business men for the business. There are certain words of David, oft quoted, about the King's business requiring haste. They were a lie to begin with, and, as applied to Christ's Kingdom are only

partly true and wholly inadequate. The King's business requires a great many things more imperatively, than *haste*. His work requires the very qualities in its servant, which you possess, if you are a successful business man. Capital, caution, confidence, attention, application, accuracy, method, punctuality, dispatch—these are the elements for efficient conduct of business of any sort. They are the very elements that have built up and would to-day rejuvenate the business at the old stand of Foreign Missions.

This business of Foreign Missions is sorely in need of less criticism and more capital. You can supply it. It is acknowledged on the Best Authority to be the most paying investment in the world. *Ten thousand per cent.* (or an hundred fold) is guaranteed; and has been paid to investors again and again. The enterprise of carrying the gospel to every creature is older, has more branch-offices, and covers a wider territory than the Standard Oil Company and furnishes better light and warmth to humanity. Why are business men afraid to sink capital in this Divine Trust? But it is more than mere capital that the business needs. *Foreign Missions need you, yourself.* A business enterprise needs business men to direct it, to extend it, and to carry it on. Some of the most successful missions were inaugurated by laymen or business men. There is to-day a wider and louder call for consecrated business men in the Foreign Mission field than there ever was before. The whole problem of *industrial-missions*, which lies back of that other problem of obtaining a self-supporting native church, will have to be solved by men of business. The cause of Foreign Missions needs the help of business men in its administration; business men who will give their time and talent to this important work and make it their business to do the Lord's work in a business-like way.

When the Master walked outside of Capernaun one day His eye fell on a business man named Matthew, sitting in the midst of account-books and vouchers, at the receipt of custom. And He said unto him, follow Me And this business man left all rose up and followed Him.

"Beloved, let us love so well,
Our work shall still be better for our love
And still our love be sweeter for our work."

Christ Himself had no higher word by which to designate His mission on earth and His passion for a lost world than the word that joins you to Him as a fellow-craftsman at the same task. "*Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's* BUSINESS?" You are a business man and I want to ask you a straightforward question: Who is *your* Father? And what is His Business?

BAHREIN, 1901.

The Man of Business

in account with

Foreign Missions

		DR.			CR.		
"The Year of my redeemed" Isa. 63: 4.	"How much owest thou?"	Luke	16	5			
	"Owe no man anything"	Rom.	13	8			
	"I am Debtor both: to the Greeks and to the barbarians."	Rom.	1	14			
	"Their debtors they are."	Rom.	15	27			
	"I will pay my vows now."				Ps.	116	14
	We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do."	Luke	17	10	Luke	17	10